

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (original) A verification method for use over the Internet, comprising the steps of:

an Internet service provider ("ISP") collecting a predetermined fact about a user when the user contracts with the ISP for access to the Internet;

the ISP intercepting a request from the user's browser for a particular web page;

the ISP inserting the predetermined fact about the user into a field in the request;

the ISP forwarding the request to a web server addressed by the request;

the web server reading the predetermined fact about the user from the field in the request; and

the web server responding to the request as a function of the predetermined fact about the user.

2. (original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the predetermined fact about the user is an age group in which the user belongs.

3. (original) The method as recited in claim 2, wherein the step of the web server responding to the request further comprises the steps of:

the web server determining if the requested web page is authorized to be sent to a user in the age group; and

sending the web page to the user's browser if the requested web page is authorized to be sent to a user in the age group.

4. (original) The method as recited in claim 3, wherein the step of the web server responding to the request further comprises the steps of:

not sending the web page to the user's browser if the requested web page is not authorized to be sent to a user in the age group.

5. (original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the predetermined fact about the user is a geographical location where the user resides.

6. (original) The method as recited in claim 5, wherein the step of the web server responding to the request further comprises the step of:
determining a sales tax rate to apply to any potential purchase made by the user as a function of the user's geographical location.

7. (original) The method as recited in claim 5, wherein the step of the web server responding to the request further comprises the steps of:
calculating sales tax to apply to the potential purchase made by the user as a function of the determined sales tax rate; and
charging the sales tax to the user.

8. (currently amended) An Internet service provider ("ISP") system comprising:
a database of users who have contracted with the ISP to obtain access to the Internet through the ISP, wherein the database includes facts indicating particular age groups in which the users belong;

ISP circuitry for intercepting a HTTP request for a particular web page from one of the users;

ISP circuitry for identifying the user who sent the HTTP request and for determining from the database the particular age group of the user who sent the HTTP request;

ISP circuitry for inserting the particular age group into a specified field within the HTTP request; and

ISP circuitry for forwarding the HTTP request to a web server containing the particular web page identified in the HTTP request.

9. (currently amended) An Internet service provider ("ISP") system comprising:
a database of users who have contracted with the ISP to obtain access to the Internet through the ISP, wherein the database includes facts indicating particular geographical locations in which the users reside;

ISP circuitry for intercepting a HTTP request for a particular web page from one of the users;

ISP circuitry for identifying the user who sent the HTTP request and for determining from the database the particular geographical location of the user who sent the HTTP request;

ISP circuitry for inserting the particular geographical location into a specified field within the HTTP request; and

ISP circuitry for forwarding the HTTP request to a web server containing the particular web page identified in the HTTP request.

10. (currently amended) A method implemented within an Internet service provider ("ISP") system, comprising the steps of:

collecting by the ISP a predetermined fact about a user when the user contracts with the ISP for access to the Internet;

intercepting by the ISP a request from the user's browser for a particular web page;

inserting by the ISP the predetermined fact about the user into a field in the request; and

forwarding by the ISP the request to a web server addressed by the request.

11. (original) The method as recited in claim 10, wherein the predetermined fact about the user is an age group in which the user belongs.

12. (original) The method as recited in claim 10, wherein the predetermined fact about the user is a geographical location where the user resides.

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13. (original) The method as recited in claim 10, wherein the inserting step inserts the predetermined fact into a cookie within the request.

14. (original) The method as recited in claim 10, wherein the inserting step inserts the predetermined fact into a FROM field within the request.

15. (original) The method as recited in claim 10, wherein the inserting step inserts the predetermined fact into a header field within the request.

16. (original) The method as recited in claim 10, wherein the collection step further comprises the steps of:

creating a database of users contracting with the ISP for access to the Internet;
and

inserting into entries in the database the predetermined fact for each of the users.

17. (original) The method as recited in claim 16, wherein the inserting step further comprises the step of:

determining the predetermined fact pertaining to the user when the user logs on to the ISP system by searching the database.

18. (original) A network comprising:

an Internet service provider ("ISP") coupled to the Internet;

a client machine operated by a user and operable for logging on to the Internet through the ISP with a browser loaded onto the client machine, the ISP operable for collecting a predetermined fact about the user when the user contracts with the ISP for access to the Internet, the browser on the client machine operable for sending a request for a particular web page, the ISP operable for intercepting the request from the user's browser for the particular web page, the ISP operable for inserting the predetermined fact about the user into a field in the request, the ISP operable for forwarding the request to a web server addressed by the request; and

a web server coupled to the Internet, the web server operable for reading the predetermined fact about the user from the field in the request, the web server operable for responding to the request as a function of the predetermined fact about the user.

19. (original) The network as recited in claim 18, wherein the predetermined fact about the user is an age group in which the user belongs.

20. (original) The network as recited in claim 19, wherein the web server is operable for (1) determining if the requested web page is authorized to be sent to a user in the age group, (2) sending the web page to the user's browser if the requested web page is authorized to be sent to a user in the age group, and (3) not sending the web page to the user's browser if the requested web page is not authorized to be sent to a user in the age group.

21. (original) The network as recited in claim 18, wherein the predetermined fact about the user is a geographical location where the user resides.

22. (original) The network as recited in claim 21, wherein the web server is operable for (1) determining a sales tax rate to apply to any purchase made by the user as a function of the user's geographical location, (2) calculating sales tax to apply to the purchase made by the user as a function of the determined sales tax rate, and (3) charging the sales tax to the user.

23. (currently amended) A computer program product adaptable for reading by a computer storage means in an ISP server and operable to perform the program steps of:

collecting in the ISP server a predetermined fact about a user when the user contracts with the ISP for access to the Internet;

intercepting by the ISP server a request from the user's browser for a particular web page;

inserting by the ISP server the predetermined fact about the user into a field in the request; and

forwarding by the ISP server the request to a web server addressed by the request.

24. (original) The computer program product as recited in claim 23, wherein the predetermined fact about the user is an age group in which the user belongs.

25. (original) The computer program product as recited in claim 23, wherein the predetermined fact about the user is a geographical location where the user resides.

26. (original) The computer program product as recited in claim 23, wherein the inserting step inserts the predetermined fact into a cookie within the request.

27. (original) The computer program product as recited in claim 23, wherein the inserting step inserts the predetermined fact into a FROM field within the request.

28. (original) The computer program product as recited in claim 23, wherein the inserting step inserts the predetermined fact into a header field within the request.

29. (original) The computer program product as recited in claim 23, wherein the collection step further comprises the program steps of:

creating a database of users contracting with the ISP for access to the Internet;

and

inserting into entries in the database the predetermined fact for each of the users.

30. (original) The computer program product as recited in claim 29, wherein the inserting step further comprises the program step of:

determining the predetermined fact pertaining to the user when the user logs on to the ISP system by searching the database.